(vii) Branding of Retail Outlets and third party certification of Retail Outlets have been initiated by the OMCs.

(viii) Effective 2nd October 2005, Government launched the Jan Kerosene Pariyojana as a pilot projects in 420 blocks for a period of six months with a view to strengthening and streamlining the infrastructure for kerosene distribution and involving the Gram Sabhas and Gram Panchayats and State Panchayati Raj Institutions in the supervision of PDS kerosene distribution, so as to ensure that entitled beneficiaries actually receive their entitlement and diversion to adulteration and black-marketing is capped, reversed and eventually eliminated. The pilot project is being concurrently evaluated by NCAER and, on the basis of the experience gained, Government will determine the possibility and desirability of extending the Pariyojana to cover all blocks in the country.

Measures to check adulteration are kept under continuous review of the Government.

Shifting of ONGC offices

t683. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many offices of ONGC, Dehradun have been either closed or opened somewhere else and number of employees and officers working therein have been reduced;

(b) whether local public representative have submitted memorandum to them against this step; and

(c) if so, the reasons for reducing the number of employees of ONGC, Dehradun and what steps are been taken to address the above grievances of the public representatives?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. ONGC has neither closed nor shifted any offices from DehraDun. The marginal reduction in the number of officers/

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

officials working in ONGC Dehradun from 3405 on 31.3.2002 to 3006 on 31.3.05 is on account of natural process like superannuation, VRS, resignations and deaths, including deaths in accidents.

(b) A few references had been received from Public representatives/ political persons on various issues including shifting of offices/transfer of personnel from ONGC, Dehradun. These references have been replied to intimating that ONGC has no plans to do so.

(c) Does not arise in view of the reply given at (a) and (b) above.

Revision in prices of petroleum products

684. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have set up a high power committee to formulate a fuel pricing policy and taxation regime for petroleum products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have decided not to revise the prices of petroleum products till March, 2006; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROlEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to formulate a long-term pricing policy for petroleum products, the Government have constituted an inter-ministerial Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister.

The Committee is mandated to look into various aspects of pricing and taxation of petroleum products with a view to stabilizing/rationalizing their prices, keeping in view the financial position of the oil companies, the investment needed in the sector, the need to conserve petroleum products, and establishing a transparent mechanism for the autonomous adjustment of prices by the oil companies. Taking into consideration the interests of